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ABSTRACT

Representatives of eleven member services of the National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services met in Washington, D.C. on July 25, 1969, to discuss the report "Scientific and Technical Communication; A Pressing National Problem and Recommendations for its Solution," June 1969. This Report (known as the SATCOM Report) was marked by one Federation member as "a document of major importance to abstracting and indexing services." This paper represents the views of this Report expressed by representatives of the Federation member services who attended the meeting. (Author)

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A POSITION STATEMENT ON THE SATCOM REPORT PREPARED BY THE FEDERATION MEMBER SERVICES

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NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SCIENCE ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING SERVICES

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Technical Report No. 2
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Abstract

Representatives of eleven member services of the National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services met in Washington, D.C. on July 25, 1969, to discuss the report Scientific and Technical Communication; A Pressing National Problem and Recommendations for its Solution, June 1969. This Report (known as the SATCOM Report) was marked by one Federation member as "a document of major importance to abstracting and indexing services." This paper represents the views on this Report expressed by representatives of the Federation member services who attended the meeting.

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Abstracting and Indexing Services

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A POSITION STATEMENT ON THE SATCOM REPORT PREPARED BY THE FEDERATION MEMBER SERVICES

Introduction

The National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services believes that the SATCOM Report published by the National Academy of Sciences/National Academy of Engineering is a document of major importance to publishers of abstracting and indexing services. The Federation felt an obligation to both its members and the information science community to respond formally to this Report. A special meeting was therefore held in July, 1969, to reach a Federation position on the SATCOM Report.

The position statement, as presented in this Report, is being distributed to the Academies, and the members of the SATCOM Committee. It is also being made available to the information science community through the Federation's Publication Program.

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Foster D. Smith and Mr. Joel Lloyd of the American Geological Institute, who handled the local arrangement for the July meeting and chaired the discussion. I would also like to especially thank Michael Tomaino, Engineering Index, who acted as rapporteur for the July meeting and prepared this Report in its final form.

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Technical Report No. 2
January, 1970

A POSITION STATEMENT ON THE SATCOM REPORT PREPARED BY THE FEDERATION MEMBER SERVICES

SUMMARY

The National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services, a Federation of private not-for-profit publishers of scientific and technical information, commends the Committee on Scientific and Technical Communication (SATCOM) of the National Academy of Sciences-National Academy of Engineering (NAS-NAE) for its report on Scientific and Technical Communications; A Pressing National Problem and Recommendations for Its Solution. The Federation recognizes the primary concerns; endorses the overall philosophy and framework for action presented in 55 recommendations; and offers its full cooperation in the work to come in all appropriate ways. The Federation endorses the recommendation calling for a nonfederal information commission responsible to the councils of the NAS-NAE. Two recommendations directly addressed to the Federation are endorsed: a program to guide library users to appropriate information sources, and a program to establish documentation guidelines for editors. Other recommendations on funding and self-support, performance evaluation, and identifying users and their needs are of prime importance to the Federation. The SATCOM Report has already made an impact on Federation members, and the Report will have a direct influence on the programs and activities of the Federation in the future.

SATCOM Report Statement

THE SATCOM REPORT: A document of major importance to abstracting and indexing services.

The National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services commends the Committee on Scientific and Technical Communication (SATCOM) of the National Academy of Sciences-National Academy of Engineering (NAS-NAE) for its Report on Scientific and Technical Communication; A Pressing National Problem and Recommendations for its Solution, June, 1969, and offers its cooperation in the work to come, in all apprcpriate ways. The SATCOM Report should achieve the status of a classic study on scientific and technical communications.

The Report is the result of a three-year study (1966-1968), funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), to investigate the present and future requirements of the scientific and engineering communities with respect to the flow and transfer of information. This information results from an annual national research-and-development expenditure "that is mounting above $27 billion, with little indication of its leveling off." The Report examines the extraordinarily diverse network of people and organizations that produce and use this information. The Report proposes concepts and policies, and indicates courses of action for maximum effectiveness.

THE PRIMARY CONCERNS

Major emphases of the Report have been placed on fifty-five recommendations presented to deal with unsolved problems in crucial areas, and efforts necessary to assure the competent performance required to produce

adequate information products and services. The Report defines and suggests roles and responsibilities for getting the job done, advocates certain broad policies in management and planning, analyzes the economics of information transfer, outlines the impact of new technologies, and proposes a way of effecting greater coordination and cooperation among a diverse complex of organizations and people involved in preparing and disseminating information products. The Report subscribes to the philosophy that the efforts of the government and private organizations (both for-profit and not-for-profit) for effective communication of scientific and technical information should be mutually reinforcing.

The National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services endorses the overall philosophy and framework for action presented in the Report, although Federation members reserve the right to differ in particulars of the Report having to do with specific courses of action, emphasis or lack of emphasis, inclusions or exclusions, and suggested roles and responsibilities of the various information communities.

THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

One major recommendation of the SATCOM Report, recommendation A1, calls for the establishment of a nonfederal information commission under the NAS-NAE to facilitate coordinated planning for private organizations (both for-profit and not-for-profit) as is done for federal agencies by the Committee on Scientific and Technical Information (COSATI) of the Federal Council for Science and Technology. The Report further suggests that the National Science Foundation assume the financial

obligations of the proposed NAS-NAE information commission.

Recommendation A1 reads in full:

"We recommend the establishment of a Joint Commission on Scientific and Technical Communication, responsible to the Councils of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering. This Commission should be conversant with activities on scientific and technical information and should provide guidance useful to public and private organizations in the development of more-effective scientific and technical communication. The Commission should be a group with as broad a representation as feasible of the major scientific and technical communities and the principal kinds of organizations engaged in related information-handling activities. It should be supported by a professional secretariat. The Commission should be responsible for leading the private sector in the coordination of its interests and programs and in the development of broad and farsighted plans. It should also be responsible for working with appropriate government groups in formulating needed national policies and programs and for gaining broad acceptance of them."

The Federation recognizes the need for guidance and leadership at the level of the proposed commission to encourage, develop, and coordinate more effective scientific and technical information programs throughout the diverse private sector. The Federation believes that an information commission responsible to the councils of NAS-NAE is in the best position to coordinate the information activities of private organizations, and foster interaction with appropriate federal agencies in the evolution of science and engineering information policy at the national level. The Federation endorses recommendation A1, will support the leadership

offered by the proposed NAS-NAE commission, and will cooperate with the proposed commission in whatever ways are possible. The Federation would hope to be one of several communities in science and technology, not neglecting the fields of education, that would contribute of its resources and talents to the proposed commission.

The Federation endorses the suggestion that the National Science Foundation assume the financial obligations of the proposed NAS-NAE information commission. As stated in the SATCOM Report, this suggestion is considered appropriate in view of an understanding, formalized in 1964, between the Director of the National Science Foundation and the President's Special Assistant for Science and Technology, that the National Science Foundation assume the responsibility for "providing leadership in effecting cooperation and coordination among non-federal scientific and technical information services and organizations towards the end of developing adequate systems for the collection, organization and dissemination of information." The Office of Science and Technology assumes the responsibility "to provide leadership in effecting cooperation and coordination among federal agencies with respect to their scientific and technical information activities."

THE ROLE OF THE FEDERATION

The National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services is a federation of major publishers of scientific and technical information. The particular business and objects of National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services, as stated in its articles of incorporation are: "(a) to foster, encourage, improve and implement the documentation (abstracting, indexing and analyzing) of the

scientific and technological literature of the world, by means which shall include, but shall not be limited to, education, research, and publication of lists of scientific and technological periodicals and other material designed to foster, encourage, improve or implement such documentation; and (b) to foster the interchange of scientific and technological information among scientists and technologists in the United States and foreign countries and to strive to provide for them the best possible information services, through the activities described in (a) above."

Federation membership consists of private, not-for-profit scientific and technical information services in the United States, including scientific and engineering societies that publish primary literature, internal information services operated within private companies, and secondary information services that abstract and index literature produced by the scientific engineering community. Since 1958 the Federation has worked to coordinate the cooperative work of its various member services, and to seek new ways of improving them.

Present Federation members provide awareness of and access to national and international literature in many different fields of science and engineering including applied mechanics, biology, chemistry, electrical and electronic engineering, geology, mathematics, metals, meteorology, dentistry, physics and psychology. The Federation believes that the continuing cooperative efforts of its members to improve communication among scientists and engineers can contribute significantly to scientific progress.

SATCOM Report Statement

A PROGRAM TO GUIDE LIBRARY USERS

Although SATCOM recommendations are not generally addressed to a specific organization, two recommendations are addressed directly to the Federation. In addition there are other recommendations addressed to specific communities involved in transfer of information, in which the Federation might have an important role.

The Federation endorses, in principle, recommendation B13, addressed directly to the Federation, which reads in full: "The National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services and an appropriate library group or groups, perhaps the Association of Research Libraries, should organize jointly -- if necessary with support from the Council of Library Resources and/or the NSF -- a working conference with broad participation for the purpose of exploring means of facilitating the guidance of all library users in their choice of the indexing and abstracting services appropriate to specific information searches."

Recommendation B13 is accepted as indicative of a need for better interaction between the abstracting and indexing community and the library community. The Federation endorses this concept for making information more accessible, also recognizing that it must also relate to other major service organizations serving need groups such as data (i.e. information analysis) centers, information processing centers, and user community organizations. Such a program will be developed by the Federation and the proposed conference might well

be one mechanism of providing the improved interaction. However, such a conference should also include representatives of the other groups named, to produce the broad participation suggested in B13. The Federation has explored relationships among these groups at its Annual Conferences. A true working conference between the Federation, representatives of the library and other communities could be valuable for improving the use of abstracting services.

Other avenues for interaction might be used, such as those that the Federation has already developed. Such projects are: a proposed training kit to be used by libraries, a series of seminars on machine readable secondary services, seminars on indexing techniques, and a Publication Program which includes a bi-monthly Newsletter and a series of Technical Reports. These projects are being developed in conjunction with information processing center and library school personnel as appropriate.

A PROGRAM TO ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTATION

The Federation endorses, in principle, recommendation C4, addressed directly to the Federation, which reads in full: "The National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services should seek support for the development and promulgation of guidelines to be followed by editors and publishers of primary information in specifying the required documentation units."

There is a great deal of uncoordinated activity in developing different

forms and pieces of a "documentation unit." One of the functions of the Federation is to bring together the results of these activities in a way that enhances the effectiveness of all its member services, and by encouraging optimum use of the available efforts of authors, editors and other specialized groups.

The Federation has had an active Bibliographic Citation Committee since September 1968. The Committee's objectives are: "to review the various bibliographic practices of abstracting and indexing services beginning with those of NFSAIS member services. The purpose of this review is to arrive at a set of NFSAIS recommendations for the content and order of the elements of data for printed and machine readable bibliographic citations for use in abstracting and indexing publications and services." This Committee has been concerned with many problems in this area on a national and international level. Recommendation C4 has been referred to this Committee and may well affect the direction of this Committee's activities in the consideration of primary journal publication requirements.

FUNDING, SELF-SUPPORT, AND EVALUATION

In turning to the recommendations not addressed directly to the Federation but that are of prime importance to the abstracting and indexing community represented by the Federation, the Federation endorses, in principle, recommendations B10 and B15.

Recommendation B10 reads in full: "Those societies and agencies concerned with the conduct and support of abstracting services should seek actively to identify difficulties, find solutions, and take the initiative

in proposing and testing arrangements through which an increasing contribution by the sponsors of research to the input costs of the basic abstracting services can make transfer for reprocessing financially possible at approximately output costs."

Recommendation B15 reads in full: "All agencies which either operate or sponsor the operation of major scientific-and-technical-information programs should take steps to incorporate into their services on a continuous and systematic basis some appropriate method of performance evaluation. Provision should be made for using such evaluation measurements as a basis for modification and improvement of the services."

In considering B10, the Federation recognizes the variability of the economics in different fields, and believes strongly that information products often can and should be self-supporting. The Federation Cost Study Committee is currently exploring various approaches to cost performance and cost effectiveness, and it is hoped that these and other studies on performance evaluation to be undertaken will be of value to its member services. Finding practical answers to questions of funding and self-support, and how to supply information products to the user on an economically viable basis, are among the most important of the unsolved problems of the information field.

IDENTIFYING USERS AND THEIR NEEDS

The Federation approves, in principle, several related recommendations in the Report that focus on the study, recognition and service for

need-groups of users. The members of the Federation are currently engaged in many of the activities suggested in these recommendations. The Federation encourages additional efforts to identify specific needs of users, and specific user groups.

In reviewing the range of detailed recommendations, the Federation recognizes several which deal in detail with abstracting and indexing activities, and have varying degrees of pertinency to the operating situations of its member services. The Federation will be glad to enter into detailed discussion and to offer a response at length, through specific study groups if necessary, when the further development of the commission and its program warrants. The SATCOM Report has already made an impact on Federation members, and the Report will have a direct influence on the programs and activities of the Federation in the future.

MEANINGFUL INFORMATION PATTERNS

The ultimate significance of the SATCOM Report lies in its solid contributions as to how the existing, unstructured, and extremely complex scientific and technical communications network can be marshalled to its full potential. In its broadset sense, the SATCOM Report is a declaration of the shared responsibilities of the entire scientific and engineering community, and of the institutions it serves, towards more effective communication of the advances in science and technology.

New and improved information channels for advances in and implications of science and technology can and must be made to reach effectively outside of the scientific and technical community. The information

process cannot be considered complete until meaningful information about science and technology can be woven with consummate skill into the moral, social, and economic fabric of our society -- to form patterns that make sense and encourage sanity throughout the entire community of man.

FEDERATION MEMBER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES
ATTENDING MEETING ON SATCOM REPORT
July 25, 1969

* Gordon L. Walker - American Mathematical Society
President - NFSAIS

Everett H. Brenner - American Petroleum Institute

* Marjorie R. Hyslop - American Society for Metals

H. E. Kennedy - Biological Abstracts, Inc. (BIOSIS)

* H. W. Koch - American Institute of Physics

* Joel Lloyd - American Geological Institute

* Ralph E. O'Dette - Chemical Abstracts Service

* Malcolm Rigby - American Meteorological Society

* Foster D. Smith - American Geological Institute

* Michael Tomaino - Engineering Index

* Howard E. Tompkins - Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers

Judith Werdel - Documentation Abstracts, Inc.

Stella Keenan - NFSAIS

* Director 1969-70